brands with a view to avoid excise duty; and

(b) whether Government have inquired into the matter; if so, what is the estimated evasion of Central excise duty by the Golden Tobacco Company?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. From November 1985, the approval of brand names etc. have been centralized at Delhi, to prevent such types of misuse.

The total estimated evasion of central excise duty in major cases against M/s. Golden Tobacco Company exceeds Rs. 100 crores. This amount is however subject to some modification on final adjudication of the cases.

Production of Atom Bomb by Pakistan

1971. SHRI KAPIL VERMA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is Government's assessment about the stage of production of Atom bomb by Pakistan; and

(b) whether she has already produced it or is close to it or has only acquired the capability for it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) and (b) Government are concerned at the non-peaceful dimension of Pakistan's nuclear programme. A constant watch is being kept on this aspect as all others having a bearing on India's security.

Withdrawal of Troops from Afghanistan by Soviet Union

1972. SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the reported speech of Mr. Mikhail Gorbachov that the Soviet Union will withdraw part of its troops from Afghanistan; and

(b) if so, whether the Government of India consider this move as a positive measure towards ensuring peace in this subcontinent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. India would welcome any move which contributes towards a peaceful, comprehensive political settlement of the Afghan problem based on non-intervention and non-interference.

News regarding Pakistan's plan on Punjab

1973. SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item published in the National Press on the 30th July, 1986 to the effect that Pakistan has undertaken a grand Punjab subversion plan; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and whether Government have taken up the matter with Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The news item in question relates to Pakistan's assistance to Sikh terrorists in Punjab. Our concerns on this issue have been conveyed to the Pakistan Government on different occasions and at various levels.